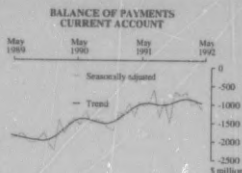


Statistics Weekly

Thursday, 9 July 1992

The week in statistics ...

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Fall in May exports causes higher current account deficit

In seasonally adjusted terms, Australia's balance of payments current account deficit for May 1992 rose \$187 million, or 20 per cent, on the previous month to \$1,131 million.

The rise in the deficit mainly resulted from a decrease of \$274 million, to \$150 million, in the merchandise trade surplus (merchandise exports fell 5% while merchandise imports rose 1%).

Partly offsetting the merchandise trade result were a fall of 5 per cent in the net income deficit to \$1,296 million, a rise of 10 per cent in the net unrequited transfers surplus to \$204 million and a marginal decline of 1 per cent in the net services deficit to \$189 million.

**BALANCE OF PAYMENTS
CURRENT ACCOUNT**
\$ million

	April 1992		May 1992	
	Original	Seasonally adjusted	Original	Seasonally adjusted
Balance on merchandise trade	481	424	676	150
Net services	-190	-191	-205	-189
Balance on goods and services	291	233	471	-39
Net income	-1,350	-1,363	-1,283	-1,296
Net unrequited transfers	215	186	162	204
Balance on current account	-844	-944	-650	-1,131

Details of the balance on merchandise trade in original terms are as follows:

Merchandise exports rose \$307 million, or 7 per cent, to \$4,887 million, mainly reflecting the rise in non-rural exports. The larger rises in this category were recorded in:

- 'other' mineral fuels, up \$95 million, or 39 per cent;
- 'other' non-rural exports, up \$71 million, or 100 per cent;
- coal, coke and briquettes, up \$58 million, or 10 per cent;
- gold, up \$44 million or 12 per cent; and
- 'other' manufactures, up \$41 million, or 10 per cent.

The only significant fall was in metal ores and minerals, down \$27 million, or 4 per cent.

Rural exports were little changed at \$1,417 million. Falls of \$55 million (22%) in cereals, \$40 million (11%) in wool and \$7 million (28%) in sugar were mostly offset by rises in 'other' rural exports, up \$70 million (15%) and meat, up \$29 million (9%).

Merchandise imports rose \$112 million or 3 per cent to \$4,211 million. The major rises were recorded in:

- ☐ civil aircraft, up \$72 million or 71 per cent as a result of the import of one Qantas aircraft valued at \$174 million;
- ☐ machinery, up \$57 million or 5 per cent; and
- ☐ fuels, up \$46 million or 27 per cent.

The main falls occurred in 'other' manufactures, down \$44 million (5%); 'other' imports, down \$29 million (13%); and chemicals, down \$24 million (5%).

The current account deficit for the eleven months ended May 1992 was \$10,577 million, down \$4,238 million or 29 per cent on the deficit for the eleven months ended May 1991.

For further information, order the publication *Balance of Payments, Australia* (5301.0), or contact Marie Flint on (06) 252 6689 or Neil Batty on (06) 252 5540.

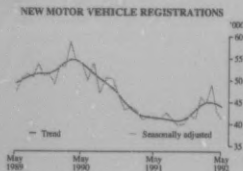
Vehicle registrations fall back

The trend estimate for total new motor vehicle registrations for May 1992 fell by 1.4 per cent, following a decrease of 0.7 per cent in April.

The two successive falls brought an end to a string of rises since September 1991. Passenger vehicles fell by 1.6 per cent while 'other' vehicles fell by only 0.4 per cent.

NEW MOTOR VEHICLE REGISTRATIONS, MAY 1992

	Percentage change in trend estimates	
	From previous month	From corresponding period of previous year
New South Wales	-2.0	4.3
Victoria	-1.8	9.7
Queensland	-0.5	7.1
South Australia	-0.8	-1.4
Western Australia	-0.8	15.0
Australia	-1.4	6.0

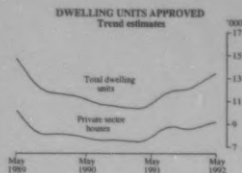


In seasonally adjusted terms, total registrations decreased 3.8 per cent in May — also the second monthly fall in a row.

In original terms, total new motor vehicle registrations for May 1992 rose by 7.7 per cent from 39,263 vehicles in April to 42,270. Passenger vehicles increased by 5.8 per cent while 'other' vehicles rose by 17.1 per cent.

All States other than the Australian Capital Territory recorded increases in total registrations for May, with Northern Territory showing the largest relative increase at 11.1 per cent.

For further information, order the publication *Registrations of New Motor Vehicles, Australia, Preliminary* (9301.0), or contact Kevin Yeadon on (06) 252 6255.



Housing growth slows

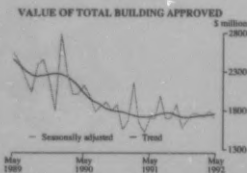
The total number of dwelling units approved (seasonally adjusted) fell by 4.5 per cent in May 1992, following two strong increases of 6.9 per cent in March and 9.7 per cent in April 1992. Private sector house approvals fell by 1.9 per cent in May 1992 following a 0.6 per cent fall in April 1992.

However the trend estimates (which largely remove the month-to-month volatility in the seasonally adjusted series) for total dwelling unit approvals continued to grow to May 1992, although the rate of growth has been somewhat dampened by the fall in the seasonally adjusted estimate for May.

The trend series for private sector house approvals is showing a pattern similar to that for total dwelling units, moving upwards but at a slower rate.

DWELLING UNITS APPROVED
MAY 1992

	Number	Percentage change	
		From previous month	From corresponding month of previous year
Private sector houses			
Original	9,597	8.0	5.0
Seasonally adjusted	9,048	-1.9	13.4
Total dwelling units			
Original	13,883	6.0	10.5
Seasonally adjusted	13,307	-4.5	18.5



The trend estimates for the value of total building approved continue to rise slowly to May 1992. The new residential building component displays the gradual growth evident in the series since March 1991. The trend series for the value of non-residential building approved fell gradually to February 1992 and are likely to continue to do so on the basis of low approvals recorded in recent months.

VALUE OF BUILDING APPROVED
MAY 1992

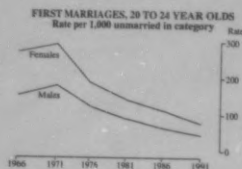
	\$ million	Percentage change	
		From previous month	From corresponding month of previous year
New residential building			
Original	1,105.2	7.1	9.2
Seasonally adjusted	1,017.9	-5.7	17.0
Total building			
Original	1,932.5	15.2	-7.6
Seasonally adjusted	1,702.3	-5.0	0.0

No longer in haste — the trend in Australian marriages

In 1991 there were 113,869 marriages registered in Australia. This represents a 2.6 per cent decrease on those registered in 1990 (116,959). The crude marriage rate continued its downward trend, from around 9 per 1,000 population in the early 1970s to 6.6 per 1,000 in 1991.

This decline was also evident in first marriage rates. Between 1990 and 1991 the most significant decline for both males and females was in the 20 to 24 years age group. The first marriage rates for males of this age declined 10 per cent to 43.9 per 1,000 single men of the same age group, while for females the first marriage rates declined 12 per cent to 75.6 per 1,000 single women of the same age group.

Both males and females continued to marry at older ages. The median age at marriage for males and females in 1991 was 28.4 years and 26.0 years respectively. In 1991, 40.9 per cent of males and 29.5 per cent of females were aged 30 years and over when married. This compared with 39.8 per cent for males and 28.9 per cent for females in 1990.



MARRIAGES, 1991
Median ages of partners in years

Previous marital status	Males	Females
Never married	26.7	24.5
Widowed	61.9	53.6
Divorced	39.7	36.1
Total	28.4	26.0

There were 76,811 marriages (67.5%) where neither partner had been previously married. The Northern Territory (59.3%) showed the lowest proportion of marriages involving never married persons while Victoria showed the highest (69.6%).

Males and females who were widowed before remarriage show different patterns in the time taken to remarry. Of the males marrying in 1991 who had previously been widowed, 61.6 per cent did so within five years of the end of their previous marriage. In contrast, the corresponding figure for females in 1991 was 42.2 per cent. Males and females who remarried in 1991 after divorce, showed a quite similar pattern in the time taken to remarriage. Within five years of the previous marriage ending, 68.9 per cent of divorced males and 65.9 per cent of divorced females had remarried.

In 1991, 38.9 per cent of males and 39.7 per cent of females who remarried had dependant children (under 16 years), from previous marriages. This compares with 39.7 per cent and 40.1 per cent respectively in 1990.

Ministers of religion performed 58.7 per cent of all marriages registered in 1991. Of those marriages performed by civil celebrants (41.3% of the total) 22.9 per cent were performed by official registrars.

For further information, order the publication *Marriages, Australia* (3306.0), or contact Michael Nunn on (06) 252 6755.

Inquiries

The ABS supplies a wide range of statistical information:

- ☐ through its bookshops
- ☐ by mail order (including subscription)
- ☐ by facsimile
- ☐ electronically.

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Superannuation funds in brief ...

The value of total assets of superannuation funds and approved deposit funds stood at \$148,379 million at the end of March 1992. This represents a decrease of \$1,022 million (0.7%) on the revised December 1991 quarter figure of \$149,401 million and an increase of \$18,055 million (13.9%) on the revised March 1991 total of \$130,324 million.

Source: *Assets of Superannuation Funds and Approved Deposit Funds, March Quarter 1992* (5656.0).

All the week's releases: 1 to 7 July

General

Publications Advice, 3 July 1992 (1105.0; free — over the counter)
Publications Advice, 7 July 1992 (1105.0; free — over the counter)
Statistics Weekly, 2 July 1992 (1318.0; \$4.20)
Economic Indicators, Vic., June 1992 (1307.2; \$6.50)

Social statistics

National Health Survey: Health Status Indicators, NSW, 1989-90 (4370.1; \$80.00) — *new issue*

National accounts, finance and foreign trade

Balance of Payments, Aust., May 1992 (5301.0; \$16.00)
International Investment Position, Aust., 1990-91 (5305.0; \$40.00)
(Previously: Foreign Investment, Aust.)
Foreign Trade, Aust.: Merchandise Exports, April 1992 (5432.0; \$9.50)
Private New Capital Expenditure, Aust., Actual and Expected Expenditure to June 1993, March Qtr 1992 Survey (5626.0; \$10.50)
Commercial Finance, Aust., April 1992 (5643.0; \$6.00)
Assets of Superannuation Funds and Approved Deposit Funds, March Qtr 1992 (5656.0; \$10.50)
Common Funds, Aust., March Qtr 1992 (5657.0; \$10.50)

Labour statistics and prices

Labour Mobility, Aust., February 1992 (6209.0; \$12.50)
Employment Injuries, Tas., 1990-91 (6301.6; \$10.50)

Agriculture

Principal Agricultural Commodities, SA, 1991-92, Preliminary (7111.4; \$10.50)
Agriculture Statistics — Selected Small Area Data, SA, 1990-91 (7120.4; \$16.00) — *new issue*

Secondary industry and distribution

Manufacturing Production, Aust.: Clothing and Footwear, April 1992 (8358.0; \$10.50)
Manufacturing Production, Aust.: Fibres, Yarns, Fabrics, Bedding and Floor Coverings, April 1992 (8360.0; \$10.50)
Manufacturing Production, Aust.: Plastics, Rubber, Paints, Detergents and Industrial Chemicals, April 1992 (8362.0; \$8.00)
Building Approvals, Aust., May 1992 (8731.0; \$13.00)
Engineering Construction Activity, Aust., March Qtr 1992 (8762.0; \$10.50)
Building Approvals, NSW, May 1992 (8731.1; \$10.50)
Building Activity, NSW, March Qtr 1992 (8752.1; \$10.50)
Building Approvals, Qld, May 1992 (8731.3; \$10.50)
Dwelling Unit Commencements Reported by Approving Authorities, Qld, March 1992 (8741.3; \$10.50)
Dwelling Unit Commencements Reported by Approving Authorities, SA, April 1992 (8741.4; \$10.50)

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Suggestions

Any suggestions for improvement to this publication should be addressed to:

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(06) 252 6104

Secondary industry and distribution — continued

Building Activity, SA, March Qtr 1992 (8752.4; \$10.50)
Tourist Accommodation, Tas., March Qtr 1992 (8635.6; \$20.00)
Dwelling Unit Commencements Reported by Approving Authorities, Tas., April 1992 (8741.6; \$5.00)
Building Approvals, NT, May 1992 (8731.7; \$7.00)

Transport

Registrations of New Motor Vehicles, Aust., May 1992, Preliminary (9301.0; \$10.50)
Motor Vehicle Registrations, Tas., May 1992 (9303.6; \$5.50)

Calendar of key releases

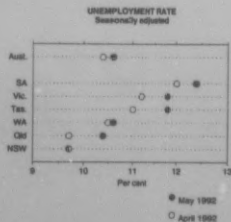
Expected releases over the fortnight to 21 July 1992

July

- 9** The Labour Force, Australia, June 1992, Preliminary (6202.0; \$10.50)
- 13** Retail Trade, Australia, May 1992 (8501.0; \$10.50)
- 14** Housing Finance for Owner Occupation, Australia, May 1992 (5609.0; \$10.50)
- 17** Export Price Index, Australia, May 1992 (6405.0; \$8.00)
Price Index of Materials Used in Building Other Than House Building, Eight Capital Cities, May 1992 (6407.0; \$10.50)
Price Index of Materials Used in House Building, Six State Capital Cities and Canberra, May 1992 (6408.0; \$8.00)
- 21** Price Indexes of Materials Used in Manufacturing Industries, Australia, May 1992 (6411.0; \$10.50)
Price Indexes of Articles Produced by Manufacturing Industry, Australia, May 1992 (6412.0; \$10.50)

The latest ...

Changes to key State indicators — consolidated to 7 July 1992



Statistics Weekly
9 July 1992

	NSW	Vic	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Aust.
— Percentage change from same period previous year —									
New capital expenditure (Dec. qtr 91)*	-25.6	-17.7	-10.8	-3.6	1.1	-51.4	n.a.	n.a.	-17.4
Retail turnover (Apr. 92) (trend estimate)	6.1	4.2	8.0	-0.4	9.3	4.3	n.a.	8.2	5.8
New motor vehicle registrations (May 92)†	-6.3	-6.5	20.0	-4.3	19.9	-6.6	-2.4	-27.0	0.3
Number of dwelling unit approvals (May 92)*	9.9	10.8	37.2	-11.5	40.6	-16.7	0.0	1.7	18.5
Value of total building work done (Dec. qtr 91)	-25.5	-25.4	4.4	-29.6	-12.9	3.4	4.3	3.4	-18.5
Employed persons (May 92)*	-1.2	-1.9	2.5	-3.3	0.9	-3.3	6.8	0.9	-0.7
Capital city consumer price index (Mar. qtr 92)	1.2	2.1	1.7	2.6	0.9	2.1	2.1	2.6	1.7
Average weekly earnings (full-time adult ordinary time) (Feb. 92)	5.5	3.4	3.2	5.3	5.1	3.2	5.7	5.3	4.4
Population (June 91)	1.3	1.1	2.2	1.2	2.0	0.9	1.0	2.9	1.5
Room nights in licensed hotels and motels, etc. (Dec. qtr 91)	3.2	3.6	10.1	-2.6	8.3	3.6	2.8	2.9	5.1

* Seasonally adjusted except for NT and ACT. † Seasonally adjusted except for Tas, NT and ACT.

Key national indicators – consolidated to 7 July 1992

		Period	Latest figure available		Percentage change (a) on	
			Original	Seasonally adjusted	Previous period	Corresponding period last year
National production						
Gross domestic product (A) — 1984-85 prices	\$m	Mar. qtr 92	n.a.	64,762	0.6	0.8
Industrial activity						
New capital expenditure — current prices	\$m	Mar. qtr 92	4,944	5,565	-2.7	-21.3
— 1984-85 prices			3,898	4,386	-2.3	-18.0
Expected new capital expenditure	"	Three months to June 92	6,727	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Retail turnover — current prices	"	Apr. 92	7,729	8,040	2.9	9.5
— 1984-85 prices		Mar. qtr 92	14,755	15,531	1.1	2.1
New motor vehicle registrations	no.	May 92	42,270	41,127	-3.8	0.3
Dwelling unit approvals	"	May 92	13,883	13,307	-4.5	18.5
Value of all building approvals	\$m		1,933	1,702	-5.0	0.0
Value of total building work done — current prices	"	Dec. qtr 91	5,977.4	5,675.6	-7.6	-18.5
— 1984-85 prices	"		3,846.5	3,652.3	-3.0	-16.8
Manufacturers' sales — current prices	"	Mar. qtr 92	32,884	35,130	1.8	0.6
— 1984-85 prices	"		22,814	24,284	1.1	-1.3
Expected manufacturers' sales	"	Three months to June 92	35,070	n.a.	n.a.	-2.0
Labour						
Employed persons (e)	'000	May 92	7,687.5	7,663.0	-0.1	-0.7
Unemployment rate † (e)	%	"	10.7	10.6	0.2	1.2
Participation rate † (e)	"	"	63.0	62.7	0.0	-0.6
Job vacancies	'000	May 92	24.3	24.8	-6.9	-3.4
Average weekly overtime per employee	hours	"	1.09	1.10	-1.5	-1.7
Prices, profits and wages						
Consumer price index	1989-90 = 100.0	Mar. qtr 92	107.6	n.a.	0.0	1.7
Price index of materials used in manufacturing industries	1984-85 = 100.0	Apr. 92	120.5	n.a.	0.4	2.5
Price index of articles produced by manufacturing industry	1988-89 = 100.0	Apr. 92	111.8	n.a.	0.2	1.2
Company profits before income tax	\$m	Mar. qtr 92	2,779	3,469	12.8	37.7
Average weekly earnings (Full-time adults; ordinary time)	\$	Feb. 92	589.20	n.a.	1.8	4.4
Interest rates (b) (monthly average)						
90-day bank bills †	% per annum	Mar. 92	7.55	n.a.	0.05	-4.05
10-year Treasury bonds †	"	"	9.90	n.a.	-0.15	-1.50
Balance of payments						
Exports of merchandise	\$m	May 92	4,887	4,536	-4.5	0.5
Imports of merchandise	"	"	4,211	4,386	1.3	12.7
Balance on merchandise trade (c)	"	"	676	150	-64.6	-75.9
Balance of goods and services (c)	"	"	471	-39	n.a.	n.a.
Balance on current account (c)	"	"	-650	-1,131	-19.8	-20.3
Terms of trade (d)	1984-85 = 100.0	Mar. qtr 92	n.a.	100.5	2.8	0.7
Foreign investment						
Net foreign debt	\$m	31 Mar. 92	148,124	n.a.	2.4	7.6
Net foreign liabilities	"	"	199,312	n.a.	3.4	10.9
Exchange rates (monthly average)						
US\$	per SA	May 92	0.7563	n.a.	-0.8	-2.4
Trade weighted index	May 1970 = 100.0	"	57.1	n.a.	-1.9	-3.9
Other indicators						
Population (resident at end of qtr)	million	Dec. 91	17.4	n.a.	0.3	1.4
Overseas visitor arrivals	'000	Apr. 92	204	219	6.2	19.7

(a) Based on seasonally adjusted figures where available. (b) Source: Reserve Bank of Australia. (c) For percentage changes, a minus sign indicates an increase in the deficit; no sign means a decrease in the deficit or an increase in the surplus. (d) The ratio of the price of goods and services for exports to that for imports. (e) Later figures expected to be released Thursday, 9 July 1992.

NOTES: † = change is shown in terms of percentage points. n.a. = not available.

Figures have been taken from a variety of ABS publications. Copies may be obtained from Information Services (see page 6).

Some of the figures shown are preliminary, some final, and some are revisions of previously published figures. Users should check the latest relevant publication or with the ABS Information Services if the status of the statistic is important.

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